

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01

OMB-01 IGA-02 /131 W

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R 271220Z DEK 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE 259

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

WMEMBASSY DACCA 5207

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LBREVILLE

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AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY MOSKOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY N
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
RUFHYKT/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT 008
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
AMCONSUL BOMBWY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL HONK KONG
AMCONSUL MADRAS
USLO PEKING
USMISSION USUN NEW YRRK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 18571

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, XA, XJ, XW, XY, XI

SUBJ: INDIA'S AFRICA POLICY

SUMMARY: INDIA'S CURRENT POLICY TOWARD AFRICA TENDS TO SUPPORT A THESIS THAT A NEW CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY MAY BE DEVELOPING, ONE WHICH WOULD PROJECT INDIA AS AN ECONOMIC BRIDGE BETWEEN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND THE THIRD WORLD. POLITICALLY, INDIA HAS
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TWO BASIC INTERESTS IN SUBSAHARAN AFRICA: 1) CULTIVATING AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR ITS LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT; AND 2) DEVELOPING A STRING OF FRIENDLY COUNTRIES ON THE WESTERN REACHES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN. THE GOI SEES ITS INTERESTS SERVED BY A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS OF NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA, BUT IS PREPARED TO SUPPORT THE LIBERATION STRUGGLES WITH MILITARY MATERIEL AND TRAINING. HOWEVER, THE GOI HANDLES THE ISSUE OF SOUTH AFRICA WITH GREAT RESTRAINT BECAUSE OF ITS CONCERN FOR THE 800,000 INDIAN ETHNICS THERE. ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE IN INDIA'S DIALOGUE WITH THE AFRICAN STATES INCLUDE THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A ZONE OF PEACE, NUCLEAR ENERGY, AND REORDERING THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM. ALTHOUGH SUBSAHARAN AFRICA REPRESENTS ONLY A SMALL PROPORTION OF INDIA'S FOREIGN COMMERCE, INDIAN EXPORTS TO THE AREAS HAVE DOUBLED OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS. THE GOI SEEKS TO USE ITS MANPOWER AND

TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS AS AN OPENING TO IMPROVE POLITICAL RELATIONS, DEVELOP TRADE, ENCOURAGE JOINT INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES AND PRODUCE REMITTANCE BENEFITS FOR INDIA. END SUMMARY.

1. INDIA'S CURRENT POLICY TOWARD AFRICA TENDS TO SUPPORT A THESIS THAT A NEW CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY MAY BE DEVELOPING, ONE WHICH WOULD FOCUS UPON INDIA AS AN ECONOMIC INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN THE DEVELOPED AND THE DEVELOPING STATES. WE SEE SOME EVIDENCE THAT INDIA, HAVING LOST MUCH OF ITS 1950'S PRESTIGE AS A LEADER OF THE THIRD WORLD, MAY NOW BE SEEKING TO REESTABLISH THAT LEADERSHIP ON THE BASIS OF BEING ABLE TO SPEAK AS A POOR MSA STATE, YET ONE WITH THE MOST SOPHISTICATED AND DEVELOPED INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL BASE OF ALL THE LDC'S. IF THIS THESIS IS CORRECT, THE GOI WOULD SEEM TO BELIEVE THAT THIS COMBINATION OF SOPHISTICATION, WHICH ENABLES IT TO UNDERSTAND AND DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH DEVELOPED

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COUNTRIES, AND OF SHARED NEED, WHICH ENABLES IT TO SYMPATHIZE WITH AND APPRECIATE THE CONCERNS OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, PROVIDES INDIA A VIRTUALLY UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH ITSELF AS A KEY INTERLOCUTOR BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH.

2. IN TERMS OF THIS NEW ROLE, THE GOI APPEARS TO BE SINGLING OUT SUBSAHARAN AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST AS KEY AREAS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD, ALTHOUGH WE ANTICIPATE GREATER ATTENTION IN THE FUTURE TO OTHER REGIONS AS WELL. THE FOUNDATIONS ON WHICH THE DIPLOMATIC AND ECONOMIC EFFORT TOWARD AFRICA SEEMS TO BE PREDICATED ARE THE RELATIVE SIMPLICITY AND BACKWARDNESS OF MOST AFRICAN STATE ECONOMIES; THE GEOGRAPHIC PROPINQUITY OF THE CONTINENT, PARTICULARLY EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA; THE POTENTIAL MARKETS FOR INDIAN GOODS AND SURPLUS SKILLED MANPOWER; AND INDIAN SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL OBJECTIVES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

3. POLITICALLY, INDIA HAS TWO BASIC INTERESTS IN SUBSAHARAN AFRICA. FIRST, THE RESPONSIVENESS OF THE NUMEROUS AFRICAN STATES TO THE INDIAN LEAD ON A VARIETY OF MULTILATERAL ISSUES MAY PROVE CRUCIAL TO THE GOI'S RETENTION OF INFLUENCE IN THE NON-ALIGNED; AND SECOND, EAST AFRICA IS ESSENTIAL TO INDIA'S DESIRE TO DEVELOP A STRING OF FRIENDLY COUNTRIES ALONG THE WESTERN RIM OF THE INDIAN OCEAN. THESE TWO INTERESTS ARE UNLIKELY TO CHANGE OVER THE LONG-TERM OR TO BE MODIFIED APPRECIABLY BY TOPICAL EVENTS AND ISSUES.

NONETHELESS, CURRENT ISSUES ARE IMPORTANT, CHIEF
AMONG THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07
FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01
OMB-01 IGA-02 /131 W

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R 271220Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SEKSTATE 260
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY GANGUI
AMEMBASSY BANJUL
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
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AMEMBASSY COTONOU
WMEMBASSY Dacca 5208
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
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AMEMBASSY MASERU
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UFHYKT/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT 009
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
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AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL MADRAS
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEKTION 2 OF 2 NEW DELHI 18571

4. THE GOI SEES ITS INTERESTS BEST SERVED BY A PEACEFUL
RESOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA.
REVIEWING A CONFERENCE OF INDIA'S AMBASSADORS TO SUB-
SAHARAN AFRICA HELD IN DELHI EARLY IN DECEMBER UNDER
THE PERSONAL DIRECTION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND
FOREIGN SECRETARY, W.K. DAMODARAN, THE MEA JOINT
SECRETARY FOR POLICY PLANNING, HAS TOLD US THAT, WERE
THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA TO TURN VIOLENT AND
RACIAL, INDIANS LIVING IN THE REGION WOULD BE LUMPED
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WITH WHITES AS "NON-AFRICANS," REGARDLESS OF THE GOI'S
LONG-TIME FERVENT SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.
FOR THIS REASON AS WELL, THE GOI DRAWS A PARTICULARLY
CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE FORMER
COLONIAL AREAS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. IT HANDLES THE ISSUE
OF SOUTH AFRICA WITH GREAT RESTRAINT IN ORDER NOT TO
COMPLICATE MATTERS FOR THE 800,000 INDIAN ETHNICS THERE.
FOR THE "COLONIAL AREAS," HOWEVER, THE GOI IS PREPARED
TO SUPPLY TO THE LIBERATION FORCES MORAL AND MATERIAL

SUPPORT INCLUDING, DAMODARAN TOLD US, ARMS AND TRAINING. THERE ARE SOME INDICATIONS THAT THE GOI HAS ALREADY SUPPLIED SMALL ARMS AND AMMUNITION AND TRAINING, AND WE STRONGLY SUSPECT THAT IT INTENDS TO INCREASE SUCH SUPPORT.

5. IN MANY OF THE COMMUNIQUE OF RECIPROCAL HIGH-LEVEL VISITS, INDIA PURSUES THE THEME OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A ZONE OF PEACE AND HAS OBTAINED THE OBLIGATORY CONDEMNATION OF DIEGO GARCIA. DURING THE VISIT OF THE KENYAN FOREIGN MINISTER, HOWEVER, THE SOLE POINT OF DISAGREEMENT WAS THE QUESTION OF THE SOVIET BASE IN SOMALIA. OFFICIALLY, THE INDIANS DO NOT CHALLENGE THE CATEGORICAL ASSURANCES OF THE SOVIETS THAT THEY HAVE NO BASES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. SOME MEA OFFICIALS PRIVATELY CONCEDE THAT THEY FIND IT POLITICALLY EMBARRASSING TO EXAMINE THE BERBERA ISSUE CLOSELY WHILE ALSO SAYING THAT THEY ARE AS CONCERNED ABOUT THE SOVIET NAVY PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AS WE ARE. THE GOI QUIETLY WENT ALONG WITH THE COLOMBO NAM'S CONDEMNATION OF "GREAT POWER RIVALRY" AND FOREIGN BASES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. ALTHOUGH IN PRACTICE THE GOI CONTINUES TO SINGLE OUT DIEGO GARCIA, NOT BERBERA, IT HAS CEASED TO CRITICIZE SPECIFIC US NAVAL MOVEMENTS IN THE AREA.

6. OTHER INTERNATIONAL ISSUES THAT THE INDIANS HAVE STRESSED WITH THE AFRICANS ARE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR
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ENERGY, PRESUMABLY WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF JUSTIFYING INDIA'S OWN NUCLEAR PROGRAMS, AND THE REORDERING OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM. ALTHOUGH AFRICAN LEADERS IN RESPONSE HAVE ENDORSED THE BENEFITS OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY FOR ALL COUNTRIES, NONE TO OUR KNOWLEDGE HAS EXPRESSED APPROVAL OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR TESTS, AND ALL BUT FOUR AFRICAN STATES AT THE RECENT UNGA SUPPORTED PAKISTAN'S RESOLUTION FOR A SOUTH ASIAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE ZONE, A RESOLUTION AIMED SPECIFICALLY AT INDIA. ON NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC QUESTIONS, THERE IS LITTLE OVERT DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN INDIA AND THE AFRICANS. ON THE POTENTIALLY DIVISIVE QUESTION OF DEBT RELIEF, THE AFRICANS AS WELL AS OTHER DEVELOPING NATIONS HAVE DEFERRED TO THE GOI'S LEAD IN THE CIEK, PRESUMABLY IN THE NAME OF THIRD WORLD SOLIDARITY.

7. ALTHOUGH SUBSAHARAN AFRICA REPRESENTS ONLY A SMALL PROPORTION OF INDIA'S FOREIGN COMMERCE, A SUCCESSFUL EXPORT EXPANSION DRIVE HAS DOUBLED INDIAN EXPORTS TO THE AREA OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS. IT NOW BUYS FOUR PERCENT OF INDIA'S TOTAL EXPORTS AND IN COMBINATION WITH

THE ARAB AFRICAN STATES, HOLDS THE PROMISE OF BECOMING A MAJOR MARKET FOR INDIA. THE GOI'S POLICY, ACCORDING TO MEA'S BAMODARAN, IS TO USE ITS MANPOWER AND TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS AS AN OPENING TO DEVELOP TRADE, ENCOURAGE JOINT INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES AND PRODUCE REMITTANCE BENEFITS FOR INDIA. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GOI, BY STRESSING THE RELEVANCE OF ITS OWN EXPERIENCE IN DEVELOPMENT, HOPES TO PRESENT INDIA AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO EUROPEAN SUPPLIERS OF MANUFACTURES AND TECHNOLOGIES. IN WEST AFRICA, WHILE MOST OF THE FRANCOPHONE STATES ARE "TERRA INCOGNITA" FOR INDIA, NIGERIA IS THE LARGEST SUBSAHARAN MARKET FOR INDIAN GOODS. RELATIONS WITH EAST AFRICA ARE MUCH MORE DEVELOPED, WITH TANZANIA, KENYA, MAURITIUS, AND ZAMBIA AS ESTABLISHED MARKETS OF INDIAN EXPORTS, PARTICULARLY OF MACHINERY, AND

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WITH SIZEABLE NUMBERS OF INDIAN TECHNICIANS, PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE, LABORERS AND ADVISORS IN THESE STATES. THERE ARE ALREADY OVER 5,000 INDIAN EXPATRIATE WORKERS IN EAST AFRICA ALONE. DESPITE THE GOI POLICY OF FOSTERING JOINT VENTURES, INDIAN INVESTMENT IN AFRICA IS STILL LIMITED, PARTLY BECAUSE PAST FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESTRAINTS HAVE FORCED THE GOI TO LIMIT INDIAN PARTICIPATION OF MACHINERY AND OTHER EQUIPMENT AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF INADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE OF AFRICAN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC MARKET CONDITIONS.

8. THIS MESSAGE SUMMARIZES AN AIRGRAM WHICH WILL BE POUCHED THIS WEEK.
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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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